



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING



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SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

MEMORANDUM

TO: Local School District Superintendents

FROM: Susan Perkowski Anderson, Director
Office of School Support Services

DATE: February 6, 2003

SUBJECT: Driver Education Funding

We have received many requests for clarification with regard to a school district's financial responsibility when offering driver education, especially dealing with "the match" and how much a student may be charged for attending driver education.

MCL 257.811 (3) reads (in part): "Beginning April 1, 1998, a local school district that offers an approved driver education course shall provide an amount equal to the pro rata amount from the driver education fund for each student residing in the district who completes segment 1 of an approved driver education course within the district." This is often referred to as "the match." Thus, a school district would still need to show, on the books, a line item expenditure for driver education. The law, however, does not identify the source of the school district's "match."

MCL 257.811 (8) reads (in part): "Beginning April 1, 1998, a public school system may impose a charge or enrollment fee for a driver education course upon a student desiring to take the course as a duly enrolled student for the course in a school of the public school system." This subsection allows for a charge, but does not "cap" the amount that can be charged.

I am aware that a memo went out when GDL was first implemented, stating that a school district could only charge students the difference between the cost of the program less the sum of the state reimbursement and school district match. However, nowhere in the law does that language exist. A directive that a school district is limited in how much they may charge a student is erroneous. However, subsection 8 does conclude with: "If a charge or enrollment fee is imposed, it shall be the same for all students who reside within the territory of the public school system." Thus, students who do not attend your school district, but still reside within its boundaries, may not be charged a higher fee. A different fee structure is allowed for out of district students.

If you have any further questions, feel free to telephone Greg Lantzy at (517) 373-3677, or email him at lantzyg@michigan.gov

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